



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4302

October 27, 2015

The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner and Leader Pelosi:

We write to express our serious concern with the provision relating to the Crime Victims Fund in the recently released bipartisan budget agreement. The draft text reveals that \$1.5 billion will be “rescinded and permanently canceled” from the Fund. The Crime Victims Fund contains absolutely no tax dollars; it is largely comprised of criminal fines that are used to serve crime victims. Essentially, through this Fund, criminals pay for the damage they cause, which is the appropriate form of justice.

It is inappropriate that money intended for direct victim services would be used as an offset for any other purpose. Not only does raiding the Crime Victims Fund violate the intent of the law, but it violates the statute itself:

42 USC 10601(c)

RETENTION OF SUMS IN FUND; AVAILABILITY FOR EXPENDITURE WITHOUT FISCAL YEAR LIMITATION

Sums deposited in the Fund shall remain in the Fund and be available for expenditure under this chapter for grants under this chapter without fiscal year limitation. Notwithstanding subsection (d)(5) of this section, all sums deposited in the Fund in any fiscal year that are not made available for obligation by Congress in the subsequent fiscal year shall remain in the Fund for obligation in future fiscal years, without fiscal year limitation.

This provision in the budget agreement sets a terrible precedent and will lead to the depletion of a Fund that is intended to be sustained for some of the most vulnerable in our society. The Crime Victims Fund has existed for 30 years and served millions of victims. We cannot balance the solutions to our significant, long-term fiscal challenges on the backs of victims of crime. We urge you to remove this provision from the budget agreement and find another offset of equal value.

Sincerely,

Ted Poe
Member of Congress

Jim Costa
Member of Congress